

MATWATCH

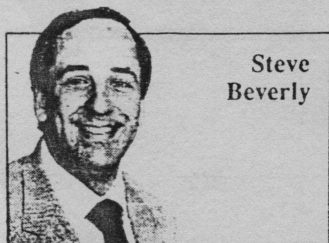
213 Pine Hills Ave. Auburn Al 36830

DECEMBER 11-17

VOL. 2, NO. 25

DANGEROUSLY ATTEMPTS TO UNIFY INDIE PROMOTIONS; GILBERT MAY BE INVOLVED

In a move speculated on since his NWA departure, Paul E. Dangerously is actively involved in efforts to unify several struggling independent wrestling promotions into a territorial effort to cover the eastern and southern U.S., MATWATCH has learned from informed sources. One key informant has told MATWATCH Eddie Gilbert will be involved in the effort and has at least one meeting scheduled on the subject this week.



Steve Beverly

Dangerously may try to revive an effort similar to their six-month run in the Continental Wrestling Federation in 1988 after Dangerously's firing from the NWA by Ric Flair in September and Gilbert's alleged falling from political favor with the Flair camp and subsequent dismissal from the NWA booking committee. Since early fall, Gilbert---a catalyst in the angle which returned Ricky Steamboat to the NWA in January---has been relegated to early card tag matches and losses on syndicated TV.

The wheels apparently began turning when Dangerously agreed to become booker for Angelo and Mario Savoldi's International Championship Wrestling. Paul E. has recruited Gilbert's brother, Doug, Vince Apollo, former CWF champ Tom Prichard and Dennis Condrey since going to ICW. Talks expanded when Dangerously, Condrey, Gilbert, USWA champ Jerry Lawler and Dallas Page worked an independent show for promoter Rob Russen in Manatee, Fla., Dec. 2.

MATWATCH has learned the following negotiations have taken place:

*** Discussions have taken place in New York concerning financial backing, sponsorships and a potential stock option plan for the proposed promotion.

*** Dangerously has been pitched the job as booker for the reviving National Wrestling Federation. If that takes place, NWF would join ICW in the consortium, sharing talent.

*** Sources say Eddie Gilbert has a meeting scheduled this week with CWF owner David Woods. Woods has shut down CWF operations after massive financial losses but the CWF show, in reruns for the rest of December, holds the key to time slots in at least seven cities, which could be valuable to a new group.

*** Dangerously had a one hour, 10-minute conversation with Lawler at the Manatee show, reportedly concerning the possibility of the dying Memphis territory uniting in the effort.

*** Page wants to incorporate portions of the DANGER ZONE angle in which Dangerously, Condrey and Doug Gilbert attacked him, into PWF creatively-sputtering PWF telecasts.

One scenario has Gilbert and Dangerously taking over booking and TV supervision for the combined group. The financially hurting GEORGIA ALL-STAR group may also be approached.

An industry analyst contacted by MATWATCH said, "It could happen and I wouldn't want to bet against Eddie and Paul. But the odds are against them



because it's so hard to clear TV time today with ratings dropping on many stations and there are a lot safer things one could put their money in than a wrestling promotion.

If such an effort gets off the ground, sources say it would be after February, when Gilbert's NWA contract expires, before the consortium could take off in earnest.

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

ESPN EXPECTED TO DROP AWA TV CONTRACT

BRISTOL, CT --- ESPN, after nearly five years with the American Wrestling Association, is not expected to renew the AWA's cable contract when it expires in early 1990.

Broadcasting industry sources say the sports network plans to phase out wrestling with the possible exception of the World Class legends show weekdays. The AWA series, relegated to a midnight Saturday slot the last two years, has only been seen three times on ESPN since October and has only one scheduled airing in December.

Industry speculation centers on the possibility of Verne Gagne ending the AWA after Larry Zbyszko's title defense in Japan in February, if the cable deal---in effect since 1985---ends.

TITAN CANCELS DEALS WITH VIEWER'S CHOICE

STAMFORD CT --- BROADCASTING Magazine reports Titan Sports has severed its pay-per-view relationship with Viewer's Choice, a leading pay distributor.

The Dec. 4 issue states Viewer's Choice will market none of the WWF's 1990 pay events and Titan distribute to cable operators itself.

Titan is expected to simultaneously sever ties to Request TV, another pay company. Insiders say the move initially

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THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

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restrict Titan's clearances to the 3-4 million homes range for RUMBLE, though company insiders claim five million will be reached. But Titan is said to be gambling on the move in the hopes that cable operators will be willing to take WRESTLEMANIA without a middleman distributor, ensuring additional profits for Titan Sports and operators.

SAJAK HOSTS WRESTLING EXHIBITION WITH CURTIS

HOLLYWOOD --- Wrestler Chris Curtis presented an 18-minute wrestling demonstration Dec. 5 on CBS' PAT SAJAK SHOW.

Curtis, a jobber for both the AWA and WWF, offered an exhibition with a graduate of his wrestling school, Mike Richards.

Sajak, who came into the ring in black togs labeling himself as "The Savage," asked Curtis the obligatory question of whether wrestling is rehearsed. Both Curtis and Richards denied it and Curtis ended the hour by putting Sajak in an airplane spin.

MATWATCH EDITORIAL

By the time a majority of you read this week's edition of MATWATCH, STARRCADE '89 will be history. Regardless of the quality of the telecast, one issue must be addressed.

One should expect in an era of increasing sophistication in wrestling fans more faith of promotions in its viewers to accept the truth.

In our view, Titan Sports again showed its contempt for fans and merits customers' contempt by failing to own up to why Akeem, Barry Windham and Tully Blanchard were not on the recent SURVIVOR SERIES card as plugged.

The NWA could have performed a great and honest service to its fans last weekend and, likewise, set a tremendous example for the wrestling business in the matter of the punctured lung of Sid Vicious. It did not.

Even with shows already taped, TBS could have instructed Jim Ross to do an insert into the show to explain to fans of

Sid's misfortune rather than trying to maintain the myth that Vicious would be in the proper shape to perform in the IronTeam tournament. Fans may be disappointed and even boo when they learn of such a situation. But, in the long haul, people are kindred enough to respect being told the truth.

The NWA knew for more than a week that the Samoan Swat Team was taking the Skyscrapers' place for an indefinite period on post-STARRCADE cards. Just like Vince McMahon knew for at least three weeks prior to SURVIVORS that neither Windham nor Blanchard would be on the show. The Turner people could have done themselves and their wrestling fans a great service by letting them in on the Vicious injury, even if it meant admitting in advance the Skyscrapers could not perform up to strength at STARRCADE. In failing to acknowledge such, TBS has missed a golden opportunity to raise the standards of an often less than ethical business where the fans are concerned.

PINFALL PROFILE

THE STORY IN NOVEMBER

This Year

PTW	(2.9/4.4)
ALL-AM	(2.4/6.0)
WCW	(3.0/5.8)
NWA M.E.	(2.7/4.7)
POWER HOUR	(2.3/4.1)

Last Year

PTW	(2.6/3.8)
ALL-AM	(2.9/7.2)
WCW	(2.7/5.2)
NWA MAIN EV.	(2.3/4.0)

The turnaround for WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING has been explosive. Last November, ratings began to increase with the advent of the Midnights-Midnights feud. But this November, ratings were up 11%. The 3.0 rating was the highest monthly average for WCW since April 1988 and the top share in 15 months.

Both WWF PRIME TIME, led by the resurgence of Roddy Piper, and NWA MAIN EVENT, which included a Flair-Rotunda matchup, posted increases. PRIME TIME jumped 15% and MAIN EVENT 18%. In the case of NME, TBS officials believe the increase is due in part because last November, promoter Jim Crockett had run out of money and MAIN EVENT was still airing reruns of Kevin Sullivan vs. Big Bear Collier matches.

The dip, and a big one, went to ALL-AMERICAN, down 17%. Most insiders chart the loss to dissatisfaction with the announce team of Gene Okerlund and Hillbilly Jim. NWA POWER HOUR, not on last year, registered its highest monthly average to date during November.

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

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SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating. NOTE: AWA/ESPN & PWF preempted, CWF closing out series with recaps.

(LUCHA LIBRE/W.I.N.) - Chacal Rivera d. Alas de Plata; Tim Talltree d. Ultraman; Ari Romero d. Bello Adan; 6-MAN: Mercenaries d. Eddie & Mando Guerrero/Capitan Oro when Handsome Harry runs in; Black Gordman d. Caballero 2000. DRAW.

(N. AMERICAN) - Brad Armstrong d. Chic "I Don't Do Jobs on TV" Donovan; WWA WOMEN'S TITLE: Bambi d. Peggy Lee Leathers; Mr. Wrestling II d. Manny Fernandez by DQ; Cousin Jr. double countout vs. Gary Albright; Pex Whatley vs. Butch Mantel in progress as show ends. PROFILES: New Fantastics, Donovan. ANGLE: Terry Gordy skirmishes with Bob & Brad Armstrong at announcer's desk. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(GA. ALL-STAR) - [RECAP]: Jim Powell double DQ vs. Nightmare Ted Allen; David Sammartino d. Billy Starr by DQ; Brad Armstrong d. Mr. Atlanta by DQ; Randy Rose d. Tony Edwards; Donovan/Sammartino d. Invader/Mighty Yankee. NO RATING.

(CWA) - Soultaker d. Kevin Dillinger; Tony Anthony d. Jim Kelly; RPM Davis/N.Y. Brawler d. Frankie Lancaster/Jordan; Chris Champion d. Keith Eric; Todd Morton d. Keith Roberson; VIDEOS: Dutch Mantel, Master of Pain; CHRISTMAS CHAOS: Jerry Lawler speaks to fans. BOMB-PLUS.

(ICW) - Mr. Pogo d. Ray Oddyssey; S.D. Jones d. Decal Don; S&S Express vs. Bob Orton Jr./Tony Atlas ends in brawl. RUMBLE SEAT: Tony Rumble w. Undertakers. BOMB-PLUS.

(USWA) - J.J. Funk d. Dog of War; Matt Borne d. Jeff Gaylord by DQ when Devastation makes its run in of the week before Dustin Rhodes, Funk save; REPLAY: B.J. Travis spansks Toni Adams; Gary Young draw vs. Bill Dundee; Eric Embry d. Buddy Landell when Buddy piledrives ref; Chris Adams d. Travis by DQ when Billy smashes a Coke bottle over Chris' head & B.J. drags Toni in again. RESTHOLD...but BOMB in taste.

(NWA/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: M.Z. Militia d. Huggy Bear Brown/Mike Diamond; Kevin Sullivan d. Scott Armstrong; 8-MAN: Road Warriors/Steiners d. Cuban Assassin/Iron Sheik/The Pro/Bob Cook. WNN: Gordon Solie predicts wins for Muta, Road Warriors at STARRCADE. FUNK'S GRILL: Terry offers Gary Hart \$1,000 every minute he could stay with him in a fight inside a Dipsy Dumpster. RESTHOLD.

[MAIN EVENT]: (Top Match) NWA WORLD TAG TITLE: Steiners d. SST by DQ. DRAW.

[WCW]: Steiners d. Nasty Ned Bradley/Gene Ligon; SST d. Rock Hard Rick/Mike Thor; Sting d. Cook; (TRIPLE CHANCE \$10,000 CHALLENGE) Midnight Express vs. 3 teams: M Ex d. Ricky Nelson/Trent Knight; M Ex d. Larry Santo/Paul Drake; Bruce Wayne/Dick Grayson d. M Ex in 20 seconds. Wayne & Grayson unmask as Dynamic Dudes & grab \$10,000 check; Zenk d. Galaxian (Danny Davis); Kendall Windham d. Rick Ryder; DOOM d. Italian Stallion/Pro; Dudes d. Pat Rose/Sean Regal; Buzz Sawyer/Great Muta d. Mike Hart/Rick Fargo; Mike Rotunda d. Tommy Rich when Mike holds onto ropes; Lex Luger d. William Bell; ANGLES: 1) Ric Flair reveals Arn Anderson as his surprise to Gary Hart & Flair, Arn & Ole brawl w. Muta/Buzz/

Dragonmaster; 2) Teddy Long offers Cuban Assassin \$350 to eliminate Norman; 3) Windham comes to ringside during Ring-Rotunda. POWERSLAM.

TV TEMPO

Week of Dec. 3-9

(NWA/SYND.) - [NWA PRO]:

Steiners d. Ryder/Cook; Z-Man d. Pro; SST d. B.D. Dalton/Huggy Bear; Sullivan d. Diamond; Dudes d. Rose/Galaxian, observed by Jim Cornette. Dudes pull in Corny & bash him around until M Ex save; Muta d. Rock Hard. PEDICINO'S NOSE: Starrcade. BOMB-PLUS.

[WORLD WIDE]: Lex Luger d. Paul Drake; Steiners d. Nasty Ned/Spike Williams; Buzz Sawyer d. Rose; M Ex d. Rock Hard/Tim Parker; DOOM Butch d. Johnny Rich; Sting d. Galaxian. RESTHOLD.

(WWF/SYND.) - [CHALLENGE]: Dusty Rhodes d. Tom Stone; Jim Duggan d. W.T. Jones; Andre the Giant/Haku d. Al Burke/Mike Shelton; Ultimate Warrior d. Conquistador I; Greg Valentine d. Warren Bianchi; Ted DiBiase d. Scott Colton; MODEL: Martel. BOMB-PLUS.

[SUPERSTARS]: Jake Roberts d. Todd Becker; UPDATE: Sherri powders Hogan/Beefcake at SURVIVORS for Zeus/Savage to jump; Hart Foundation d. Burke/Brad Perry; (REPLAY) Bossman hits Beefcake, Dusty w. nightstick at SURVIVORS; Bossman d. Larry Lawson but after, Sapphire slaps Slick & Bubba comes out to jaw with her before Dusty shoos him away; Beefcake d. Alan Reynolds; BRO. LUV: Rick Rude/Bobby Heenan; Sheepwackers d. Cleo Reeves/Jones; Curt Hennig d. Jim Evans. RESTHOLD.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Earthquake Tenta d. Reno Riggins; Ronnie Garvin d. Cong I; UPDATE: Hogan-Genius; Paul Roma d. Boris Zhukov; Beefcake d. Reynolds; Andre/Haku d. Burke/Shelton; Mark Young d. Barry Horowitz; DiBiase d. Colton; Valentine d. Snuka by DQ when Garvin runs in after Jimmy Hart had sneaked in on Snuka; BRO. LUV: Garvin chases Hart & Valentine w. knee brace. RESTHOLD.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Marc Lowrance, USWA: "Chris Adams has just had a Coke bottle smashed over his head. HE MAY BE DEAD!" 2. Jim Ross, PH: "Kevin Sullivan---the man whose heart is pure as the driven slush." 3. Gary Hart, FUNK'S GRILL, to Terry: "You want me to fight in a Dispy Dumpster? I don't want to come to your house." 4. Funk, WWW: "They oughtta have a Wet Noodle Division at STARRCADE: Hart, Long, Ellering & WOMAN. Hart would win it." 5. Bobby Heenan, PTW: "If the Genius had an IQ of 3, he'd be 4 ahead of Hillbilly." 6. Funk, WWW: "You've heard of November to Remember? This is gonna be a December to Dismember." 7. Heenan, PTW, on Thanksgiving: "You eat turkey for 6 weeks and burp for 4 months." 8. Roddy Piper, PTW: "Boobsie, you lie so much, you've got warts on the end of your tongue." 9. Ross, WCW, on Cornette: "He walks into a room voice first." 10. Ross, WCW, on Rotunda: "He made straight A's in 3 subjects: pool hall, football and study hall."

11. Bill Dundee, USWA: "You like 'em 6-foot-6, you got the Natural. You like 'em a little shorter, you got me." 12. Jim Cornette, PH: "The Sheik's been on some new kind of training program. I think he swallowed a watermelon." 13. Cornette, PH: "Some guy in Pensacola looked like Conway Twitty. He had his summer teeth in. Some are here, some

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SKANDOR AKBAR PLAGIARISM AWARD - DOOM Butch, WWW: "We're DEVASTATION!"

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Sting, NWA PRO: "...only time will tell." 2. Joe Pedicino, NWA PRO: "...out of the blue."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - TBS, for studio lights going out during Rich-Rotunda match.

BLOOPER AWARD - TBS/NWA, for Freddie Miller announcing Arn Anderson for Philadelphia in town rundowns on WCW, 20 minutes before Flair's "surprise."

BOO AWARD - 1. USWA, for 2 attacks on Toni Adams in same show. 2. NWA, for failure to insert info on Sid Vicious' condition in TBS shows.

TUBE TALK

About four months ago, I recall talk in the NWA office about trying to get on THE PAT SAJAK SHOW. If two jobbers like Curtis and Richards can get 18 minutes on SAJAK, why has the NWA not tried harder to get Flair, Sting or its stars on?...That POWER HOUR in Pensacola had to be embarrassing. All the empty seats and obvious chants of boring during Sullivan-Armstrong....The Midnights-Wayne/Grayson angle was well-done but was almost a carbon copy of the Frank & Jesse James (Dusty & Magnum) vs. Midnights on WCW in 1985....PWF didn't air because some markets didn't get tape....ICW now at 2 a.m. on Boni Blackstone's SUPERSTARS.

Upcoming WWF in Chattanooga: Hogan/Warrior vs. Hennig/Poffo, Valentine-Roberts, Rhodes-Rude....North American still has scheduled show Friday night in Athens AL with Wendell Cooley vs. The Sheik (George Weingeroff)....Dropping distributors for ROYAL RUMBLE will probably make the show lose money for Titan....Funk's & Cruise's first team efforts on WORLD WIDE show promise but they need time to jell. Still, Terry seems to be enjoying himself and Chris may be on his way to becoming the next star announcer.

Our Christmas/New Year double issue (to give me time to spend with my family over the holidays) will be mailed Dec. 26. I'm going to have another Q-and-A section on major issues. So send your questions this week. We'll also feature how I voted in the MATWATCH TV AWARDS poll....Remember, the MATWATCH HOTLINE is (205) 826-RING. If you want to comment on STARRCADE, please call but be brief so someone else can do so. PSB.

MATWATCH ANNUAL

MATWATCH 1989: THE DECADE THAT CHANGED IT ALL will be published between Dec. 15-20 and feature your selections for the 1989 MATWATCH TV AWARDS, our MATWATCH MAN OF THE YEAR, MATWATCHER OF THE YEAR, the top 10 TV news stories of the year and 20 significant events that changed the face of wrestling during the 1980s. Plus, Steve's fearless forecasts for the 1990s.

PRICE: \$10 for U.S. & Canada, \$18 for overseas. If you give an annual as a gift before Dec. 31, you will receive a 3-issue bonus extension of MATWATCH.

REMINDER: Please mail your ballots by Saturday.

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are there..." 14. Heenan & Piper, PTW: (BH) "I wouldn't give you an answer if your life depended on it." (RP) "But you would put a price on a used car." 15. Piper, PTW, to Heenan: "I'm gonna punch you so many times, people are gonna think you ARE Rick Rude with them liverlips." 16. Cornette, PH: "Jim Ross, you went out and got some crummy joke book full of one-liners to try to keep up with me." 17. Dallas Page, Florida: "If I'm gonna be the next Paul E. Dangerously, I better get some brown on my nose." 16. Paul E. Dangerously, Fla., to Page: "You're killing my stereo-type." 17. Vince McMahon Jr., WWF: "You can bet this man (BRO. LUV) won't have a NO HOLDS BARRED Christmas. He looks like he's already been down the chimney a few times." 18. Jesse Ventura, WWF, on 'Wackers: "These guys don't get fed enough, McMahon. Notice the bite marks in their caps." 19. Gorilla Monsoon & Hillbilly Jim, MSG: (HJ) "Was that a 30 or a 45 minute match?" (GM) "That was 20 minutes, Jim." (HJ) "That was the quickest 20 minutes I've ever seen." 20. Hawk, WCW: "We don't carry health insurance."

21. Pat Sajak & Mike Richards, PAT-SAJAK SHOW: (PS) "Some people say professional wrestling is rehearsed." (MR) "It may look that way but I wouldn't go out there & lose." 22. Ronald P. Gossett IV, GAS: "These fans look like welfare recipients too late to get their checks." 23. Gossett, GAS, to Tim Dix: "I feel sorry for people & dumb animals, so I'll help you all I can." 24. Samuel F. Kent, GAS, on Boni Blackstone/Missy Hyatt: "They put so much bleach on their hair, it sucked up their brains."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Heenan, PTW: "I'm very proud of what I do for a living and I wear long pants." 2. Paul E. Dangerously, to Manatee FL fans: "You're as useless as a woman from Sarasota." 3. Kevin Sullivan, WCW: "Anyone who hangs around with (Oliver) Humperdink will regress."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Chris Cruise, WWW, on Luger's outfit: "Who does he think he is? Spartacus?" 2. Rick Steiner, WWW: "Round Robin? Why do we always mess with these girls named Robin?" 3. Piper, PTW: "Have you ever noticed when Valentine first gets in the ring, he looks like he just got out of the sack?" 4. Ross, WCW, on jobber Paul Drake: "Didn't his Dad used to work for Perry Mason?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. FC LUGER (Funk calling Lex Future Champ). 2. YOU SIMPLE MINDED POD-NUHS (Funk to fans). 3. CASTRO CRUNCH (Corny on Dave Sierra's finisher). 4. THE DISTRIBUTORS OF PAIN (Bill Eadie on DEMOLITION). 5. PRINCESSES OF PEROXIDE (Kent on Hyatt/Blackstone).

BEST PICTURES - 1. TBS, Norman taking Polaroids of WOMAN. 2. USWA, Billy Travis' rosy trunks. 3. USWA, Coke bottle smash on Adams. 4. TBS, Lord Littlebrook booting jobbers. 5. NWA PRO, Muta's submission hold. 6. LUCHA LIBRE, Couple dressed as Freddy Krueger & wife attack Handsome Harry.

WORST PICTURE - Pat Sajak in wrestling togs.

WORST BUMP - Sajak fall from airplane spin.

BAD MEMORY REVIVAL - Funk, PUNK'S GRILL: "You can talk about Mr. Wing or Wang or DING or DONG or whatever."

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RATINGS ROUT: The 4.9 rating of CLASH IX made that special the top-rated program for November on TBS, according to TBS figures. Overall, it was the No. 6 show in all of cable television, topped only by five NFL and college football games on ESPN.

STAYIN' HOME: Last week was a weak one, crowd-wise, for the NWA. Attendance was so low in Dayton, Ohio, for TV that director Craig Leathers finally gave up about midway through in trying to camouflage the empty seats. The advance was so bad for Gary, Indiana, that the Wednesday show was canceled.

THAT'S NOT ALL: Empties aren't isolated to the NWA. While the WWF pulled a big 13,000 house for Hogan-Kennig and Dusty Rhodes' Austin TX debut, Titan only pulled 2,700 in Little Rock and 5,000 in San Antonio, well down usual WWF figures in those two cities.

RIGER MORTIS?: NWA is looking strongly at tape on Jushin Riger, regarded in many quarters as the top international star of '88, and may bring him in for some stateside appearances next year. Also, Jim Barnett negotiating with Japan for four of its women stars to tour here.

BYE, BYE WENDI: Wendi Richter is the latest to bolt the AWA. She quit the group Dec. 1, in case you were sitting on the edge of your chair for the news.

NWA NAMES: The Galaxian, who appeared on both NWA syndicated shows last weekend was former CWF star Danny Davis, who was using the gimmick and name he originally started with in Tennessee years back. Also, Cactus Jack Manson did another TBS date that will air before Christmas. He'll probably be in full time after the first of the year.

JAPANESE ROSE: Joel Deaton "injured" Randy Rose at Sunday night's GEORGIA ALL-STAR card at Marietta to allow Randy to begin his 4-week stint in Japan.

GOING DUTCH: Jerry Blackwell, a shoo-in as the Down trodden Guy of the Year, recently lost his home in a fire. The GAS guys came to do a benefit for him at the Alpharetta Auction Barn and a fair crowd turned out. But with no TV, the following week's show drew 30 people and the next week's 20. Then, a Nov. 26 show attracted all of eight people. Naturally, the show was scrubbed but how did Jerry pay off the guys? He gave them each a hamburger and a fried peach pie. But the guys had to buy their own Cokes. One of the wrestlers said, "At least in the circus, they give peanuts to the elephants but we have to buy our own Cokes."

TURNING BACK: Jerry Lawler went back to a babyface after a 2-week trial as a heel in Memphis. That's almost as quick as people used to turn for Southern. Just another clue to me that CWA has to be near the obituary stage.

ICW DATES: ICW has dates set to tape 6 hours of TV, two in each of the following cities: Milford CT (Dec. 16), Portland ME (Dec. 28) and Augusta ME (Dec. 30). Yes, Paul E. Dangerously will be the booker. Paul E. worked Rob Russen's indie show in Manatee FL Dec. 2, doing a live DANGER ZONE with Diamond Dallas Page.

MATWATCHINGS

MORE INDIE NOTES: Joe Savoldi has quit ICW in a dispute. Expect a hot tag feud between The Undertakers and the team of Dennis Condrey & Doug Gilbert over the International tag belts. Condrey/Gilbert worked against the original Fantastics at the Manatee show. Vince Apollo and Tom Prichard will be working regularly for ICW.

ORTON MOVES: Expect Bob Orton Jr. to return to the WWF full time in January for an unspecified program. He'll work ICW during December.

ON THE AIR: Dave Meltzer returns to KCBS Radio (740 AM) in San Francisco this Saturday at 6 p.m. on SPORTSBEAT with Mike Woodley. My thanks to Larry Katz (Baltimore) and John Arezzi (New York) for their hospitality when I guested on their radio shows over the past weekend.

BALLOTING: Remember, you have until this Saturday to mail in your ballots for the BEST and WORST OF... awards for our 1989 MATWATCH ANNUAL. Early tabulating indicates some close races in several categories and your vote may make the difference. So, send those things in.

MIAMI MAYHEM: A new group, TWA (Tropical Wrestling Alliance), is starting in the Miami area. TWA has two benefits scheduled in Broward County with Steve Collins and Lord Norman Smiley on top. Rusty Brooks has lost his racquet club locale for his IPWA shows in Miami.

WWF TAPINGS: Titan will tape TV in Miami Jan. 22, the night after the Jan. 21 ROYAL RUMBLE in Orlando.

CALL JUDGE WAPNER: CWF won't do that final Dec. 28 taping after all, according to sources. A number of the guys are still owed money. Dennis Condrey is said to still be waiting on \$700-1,000.

RATINGS RAP

CABLE

Week Ending Dec. 4	Rating	Share	Homes
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 12/2)	3.6	7.0	1.9 mil.
NWA MAIN EVENT (TBS 12/3)	3.3	5.6	1.68 mil.
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 12/4)	2.9	4.4	1.41 mil.
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 12/3)	2.5	6.2	1.21 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 12/1)	2.2	3.7	1.15 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR [Repeat] (12/2)	0.9	7.3	457,000

(ANALYSIS: No flukes here. For the second straight week, both WCW and NME have defeated the two WWF cable shows in the ratings. There's no explicable reason why a show headlined only by Midnights vs. Dudes would do this well. But the 3.6 was the highest WCW rating since April 1988 and the 7 share was tops for Sat. on TBS in more than two years. The 1.9 million homes were the highest ever delivered on a weekly wrestling series on TBS. The Flair-Eaton match drew a 3.5 rating peak on NME. POWER HOUR dropped, thanks to a lead-in of a 4.7 share from a fourth run of a BEVERLY HILLBILLIES retrospective. But PRIME TIME, while finishing third, still did a respectable 2.9, its peak in 2 months.)

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YOU SAID IT!!!

I don't think I've quite recovered from Survivor and SNME yet. The only good thing I can say about Survivor is that Roddy (Piper) looked pretty good considering. Note I put Hogan/Pofo on my WORST BROADCAST MATCHES (MATWATCH TV AWARDS ballot) before I even read MATWATCH. Is it me, or did Hogan just stand there looking absolutely devoid of a brain as he did in NO HOLDS BARRED?

TERESA DeMARIE
TUCKAHOE NY

Wrestling in Columbus (Ga.) without Fred Ward!!! Say it ain't so, Steve. I grew up in Columbus and have many fond memories of Fred Ward and his family. Fred giving my mother comps for her then very young son while my mother was involved in a rummage sale at the Front Street Arena. I got hooked big time and have been for the past 38 years or so. I do remember that Dr. Jerry Graham beat Tim Drake in the main event and Tim juiced. I remember Rose Ogle's (Fred's daughter) sense of humor, especially when she came into my father's drug store.

JIM RUSSELL
JACKSONVILLE FL

Everyone knows that Jim Cornette is the best interview in wrestling, but what about Stan Lane? Since the feud with the Dynamic Dudes started, Stan has done some of the best heel interviews I've ever heard. He had a great line (11/25) telling two jobbers: "It's not your fault that your parents are blood relatives." Obviously listening to Cornette the past few years has done wonders for Stansfield.

SAM NORD
WALNUT CREEK CA

I think at STARRCADE they should let Muta PIN Flair, Flair PIN Luger and Sting PIN Muta. Let Luger win, 2-1; Flair, 1-1-1; Muta, 1-2; Sting, 1-1-1. Everybody's happy and we get the desired result.

DAVE DAVIS
CARMEL CA

What is the NWA doing to Mike Rotunda and why? If Ric Flair goes out as NWA booker, will Eddie Gilbert stay and become a mid-level heel? Is the grace period up for Ric Flair as booker? Hasn't everyone been real fast in their criticisms of Flair as booker?

PAUL J. MacARTHUR
CAMILLUS NY

(PSB: 1. I honestly don't know in Rotunda's case. All I've been told is elements in the promotion feel that after the Varsity Club ended, Rotunda's ability to draw money severely cooled. I don't know if he can be regenerated. 2. I doubt it, though anything's possible. 3. No. Whereas Flair is now strictly "chairman" of the booking committee vs. "the booker," some key areas of judging a booker look good for Ric. I'll examine them in an upcoming column. 4. Possibly and I include myself in that. However, I think the jury is still out on some of the talent pushes and imports: Gary Hart, Kendo Nagasaki and Buzz Sawyer when Paul E. Dangerously is sent to the showers and Gilbert to early card loser.)

If Ric Flair resigned as NWA booker, who do you endorse as his successor other than Bill Watts? Was Eddie Gilbert dropped or did he resign his post as assistant booker? Who are the current members of the booking committee? Do you think the following will leave the NWA after their contracts expire and if so, where do you predict them to go: Eddie Gilbert, Missy Hyatt, Mike Rotunda, Kevin Sullivan and Dick Murdoch? Whatever became of Paul Jones and his tag team, the Russian Assassins?

FLOYD PERRY JR.
STOCKTON CA

(PSB: 1. Terry Funk...with Jim Ross & Jim Cornette supervising TV. 2. Our reports are Flair wanted Eddie off the committee. 3. Flair, Cornette, Ole Anderson, Ross, Funk and Sullivan---with input from Jim Barnett and Jim Herd having final say. 4. Missy auditioned for the co-host role on NWA MAIN EVENT over the weekend. Rotunda's contract does not expire until 1991. Sullivan is safe, for now, and will do mostly TV commentary. Murdoch will likely not be renewed and will work Japan and indies. If Flair continues to have his current level of influence, Eddie will probably leave after February but don't sell him short. As David Woods said, "If he has the financial backing, Eddie may be the one man who could run a successful regional territory." 5. Paul Jones has been selling Amway but did work an indie show last month. Russian Assassin I (Dave Sheldon) is The Angel of Death in Calgary. Assassin II (Jack Victory) is, of course, Jacko Victory of the New Zealand Militia and also worked as the Super Destroyer, who lost to Dr. Death on CLASH IX.)

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